

Part 1

Causative Verbs in English:

Let, Make, Have, Get, Help

The English verbs let, make, have, get, and help are called causative verbs because they cause something else to happen.

Here are some specific examples of how causative verbs work in English sentences.

How to use causative verbs in English

Grammatical structure:

LET + PERSON/THING + VERB (base form)

Examples:

- I don't let my kids watch violent movies.
- Mary's father won't let her adopt a puppy because he's allergic to dogs.
- Our boss doesn't let us eat lunch at our desks; we have to eat in the cafeteria.
- Oops! I wasn't paying attention while cooking, and I let the food burn.
- Don't let the advertising expenses surpass \$1000.

Remember: The past tense of let is also let; there is no change!

Note: The verbs allow and permit are more formal ways to say "let." However, with allow and permit, we use to + verb:

- I don't allow my kids to watch violent movies.
- Our boss doesn't permit us to eat lunch at our desks.

***** MAKE = force or require someone to take an action**

Grammatical structure:

MAKE + PERSON + VERB (base form)

Examples:

- After Billy broke the neighbor's window, his parents made him pay for it.
- My ex-boyfriend loved sci-fi and made me watch every episode of his favorite show.
- The teacher made all the students rewrite their papers, because the first drafts were not acceptable.

Note: When using the verbs force and require, we must use to + verb.

- The school requires the students to wear uniforms.
 "Require" often implies that there is a rule.
- The hijacker forced the pilots to take the plane in a different direction.
 "Force" often implies violence, threats, or extremely strong pressure
- HAVE = give someone else the responsibility to do something

Grammatical structure:

- HAVE + PERSON + VERB (base form)
- HAVE + THING + PAST PARTICIPLE OF VERB

Examples of grammatical structure #1:

- I'll have my assistant call you to reschedule the appointment.
- The businessman had his secretary make copies of the report.

Examples of grammatical structure #2:

- I'm going to have my hair cut tomorrow.
- We're having our house painted this weekend.
- Bob had his teeth whitened; his smile looks great!
- My washing machine is broken; I need to have it repaired.

Note: In informal speech, we often use get in these cases:

- I'm going to get my hair cut tomorrow.
- We're getting our house painted this weekend.
- Bob got his teeth whitened; his smile looks great!
- My washing machine is broken; I need to get it repaired.

GET = convince/encourage someone to do something

Grammatical structure:

GET + PERSON + TO + VERB

Examples:

- How can we get all the employees to arrive on time?
- My husband hates housework; I can never get him to wash the dishes!
- I was nervous about eating sushi, but my brother got me to try it at a Japanese restaurant.
- The non-profit got a professional photographer to take photos at the event for free.

HELP = assist someone in doing something

Grammatical structure:

- **HELP + PERSON + VERB (base form)**
- **HELP + PERSON + TO + VERB**

After “help,” you can use “to” or not – both ways are correct. In general, the form without “to” is more common:

- He helped me carry the boxes.
- He helped me to carry the boxes.
- Reading before bed helps me relax.
- Reading before bed helps me to relax.

Chapter 2

'as' and 'like'

Look at these examples to see how as and like are used.

- I worked as an actor for two years.
- I went home early as I felt ill.
- He looks as if he hasn't slept.
- As you know, this is the third time I've had to complain.
- He looks like his dad.
- She's like a sister to me.
- Try to do something relaxing, like reading a book or having a bath

Grammar explanation

“As and Like” are often confused since they can both be used for comparisons. There are, however, important differences.

Making comparisons

as + adjective + as and as much as

We often use the structure as + adjective + as or as much as to say if something has, or doesn't have, the same amount of that quality as something else.

- She loves curry as much as I do.
- He's not as tall as his brother.
- It's not as expensive as the other hotel.
- That dog is as big as that child!

You also have to use “as” in the expression the same as.

- Your phone is the same as mine.
- Texting is not the same as speaking in person.

like + noun

In the following comparisons, ^{like} is followed by a noun or a pronoun to say that two things are similar.

- He's like a father to me.
- She's acting like a child.
- It's like a burger but with big mushrooms instead of bread.
- There are lots of people like us.

It is also common to make comparisons using like with verbs of the senses.

- She looks like her mother.
- It sounds like a cat.
- Nothing tastes like homemade lemonade.
- It smells like medicine.
- It feels like cotton.

as if/as though + clause

As if and as though can be used to compare a real situation to an imaginary situation. They are followed by a clause (a subject and verb).

- You look as if you've seen a ghost.
- I felt as if I was floating above the ground.
- You talk as though we're never going to see each other again.

Giving examples

- We can say like or such as to give examples.
- You could try a team sport like football, basketball or hockey.
- You should take something soft, such as a towel, to lie on.

We can use as + noun to talk about a job or function.

- I worked as a shop assistant for two years.
- He used his coat as a blanket to keep warm.

as to connect two phrases

“as” can be used as a conjunction to connect two phrases. It can have different meanings.

as = 'because'

- All the tickets were sold out as we got there too late.
- As the road was closed, I had to park on the next street.

as = 'while' or 'during the time that'

- She called as I was getting out of the bath.
- As they were arriving, we were leaving.

as = 'in the way that'

- As we expected, it started to rain.
- As you know, classes restart on 15 January.
- As I said, I think this project will be a challenge.

**** Note that in informal speech, people sometimes say like for 'in the way that'.**

- Like I said, I didn't know her.

Part 3

'used to' + infinitive and 'be' or 'get used to' + '-ing'

Do you know the difference between I used to drive on the left and I'm used to driving on the left?

Look at these examples to see how used to, get used to and be used to are used.

- I used to want to be a lawyer but then I realised how hard they work!
- How's Boston? Are you used to the cold weather yet?
- No matter how many times I fly, I'll never get used to take-off and landing!

Used to + infinitive and be/get used to + -ing look similar but they have very different uses.

used to

We use used to + infinitive to talk about a past situation that is no longer true. It tells us that there was a repeated action or state in the past which has now changed.

- She used to be a long-distance runner when she was younger.
- I didn't use to sleep very well, but then I started doing yoga and it really helps.
- Did you use to come here as a child?

be used to and get used to

Be used to means 'be familiar with' or 'be accustomed to'.

- She's used to the city now and doesn't get lost any more.
- He wasn't used to walking so much and his legs hurt after the hike.

- I'm a teacher so I'm used to speaking in public.

We use get used to talk about the process of becoming familiar with something.

- I'm finding this new job hard but I'm sure I'll get used to it soon.
- It took my mother years to get used to living in London after moving from Pakistan.
- I'm getting used to the noise now. I found it really stressful when I first moved in.

Be used to and get used to are followed by a noun, pronoun or the -ing form of a verb, and can be used about the past, present or future.

wish' and 'if only'

Do you know how to use wish and if only to talk about things you would like to change?

Look at these examples to see how wish and if only are used.

- That guy is so annoying! I wish he'd stop talking.
- I wish I lived closer to my family.
- If only I hadn't lost her phone number. She must think I'm so rude for not calling her.
- I wish they wouldn't park their car in front of my house.

We use wish and if only to talk about things that we would like to be different in either the present or the past. If only is usually a bit stronger than wish.

In the present

We can use wish/if only + a past form to talk about a present situation we would like to be different.

- I wish you didn't live so far away.

- If only we knew what to do.
- He wishes he could afford a holiday.

In the past

We can use wish/if only + a past perfect form to talk about something we would like to change about the past.

- They wish they hadn't eaten so much chocolate. They're feeling very sick now.
- If only I'd studied harder when I was at school.

We can use wish + would(n't) to show that we are annoyed with what someone or something does or doesn't do. We often feel that they are unlikely or unwilling to change.

- I wish you wouldn't borrow my clothes without asking.
- I wish it would rain. The garden really needs some water.
- She wishes he'd work less. They never spend any time together.

Part 4

Adjectives – gradable and non-gradable

Do you know how to use adjectives in phrases like *a bit cold*, *really cold* and *absolutely freezing*?

Look at these examples to see how gradable and non-gradable adjectives are used.

- It's really cold.
- It's absolutely freezing.
- This exercise is really difficult.

Gradable adjectives

Most adjectives are gradable. This means we can have different levels of that quality. For example, you can be *a bit cold*, *very cold* or *extremely cold*. We can make them weaker or stronger with modifiers:

- She was quite angry when she found out.
- The film we saw last night was really funny!
- It can be extremely cold in Russia in the winter.

Here is a list of some common gradable adjectives and some modifiers that we can use with them.

Modifiers	<i>a little/a bit</i> → <i>pretty/quite</i> → <i>really/very</i> → <i>extremely</i>
Adjectives	<i>angry, big, boring, cheap, cold, expensive, frightening, funny, hot, interesting, old, pretty, small, tasty, tired, etc.</i>

Non-gradable: absolute adjectives

Some adjectives are non-gradable. For example, something can't be *a bit finished* or *very finished*. You can't be *a bit dead* or *very dead*. These adjectives describe absolute qualities. To make them stronger we have to use modifiers like *absolutely*, *totally* or *completely*:

- Thank you, I love it! It's absolutely perfect!
- Their farm was totally destroyed by a tornado.
- My work is completely finished. Now I can relax.

Here is a list of some common absolute adjectives and some modifiers that we can use with them.

Modifiers	<i>absolutely/totally/completely</i>
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Modifiers	<i>absolutely/really</i>
Adjectives	<i>amazing, ancient, awful, boiling, delicious, enormous, excellent, exhausted, fascinating, freezing, gorgeous, terrible, terrifying, tiny, etc.</i>
Adjectives	<i>acceptable, dead, destroyed, finished, free, impossible, necessary, perfect, ruined, unacceptable, etc.</i>

Non-gradable: extreme adjectives

Adjectives like *amazing*, *awful* and *boiling* are also non-gradable. They already contain the idea of 'very' in their definitions. If we want to make extreme adjectives stronger, we have to use *absolutely* or *really*:

- Did you see the final match? It was absolutely amazing!
- After 32 hours of travelling, they were absolutely exhausted.
- My trip home was really awful. First, traffic was really bad, then the car broke down and we had to walk home in the rain.

Here is a list of some common extreme adjectives and some modifiers that we can use with them.

Part 5

British English and American English

Do you know any differences between British and American English?

Look at these sentences. Do you know which sentences are more typical of British English or American English?

- Shall I open the door for you?
- He's taking a shower.
- France have won the World Cup.
- I'm not hungry. I just ate.

The main difference between British English and American English is in pronunciation. Some words are also different in each variety of English, and there are also a few differences in the way they use grammar. Here are five of the most common grammatical differences between British and American English.

1. Present perfect and past simple

In British English, people use the present perfect to speak about a past action that they consider relevant to the present.

The present perfect can be used in the same way in American English, but people often use the past simple when they consider the action finished. This is especially **common with the adverbs *already, just* and *yet*.**

British English	American English
<i>He isn't hungry. He has already had lunch.</i>	<i>He isn't hungry. He already had lunch.</i>
- <i>Have you done your homework yet?</i>	- <i>Did you do your homework yet?</i>
- <i>Yes, I've just finished it.</i>	- <i>Yes, I just finished it.</i>

2. got and gotten

In British English, the past participle of the verb *get* is *got*.

In American English, people say *gotten*.

**** Note that *have got* is commonly used in both British and American English to speak about possession or necessity. *have gotten* is not correct here.**

British English	American English
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You could have got hurt! He's got very thin. She has got serious about her career. <p>*** BUT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you got any money? We've got to go now. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You could have gotten hurt! He's gotten very thin. She has gotten serious about her career. <p>*** BUT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you got any money? (NOT Have you gotten ...) We've got to go now. (NOT We've gotten to ...)

3. Verb forms with collective nouns

In British English, a singular or plural verb can be used with a noun that refers to a group of people or things (a collective noun). We use a plural verb when we think of the group as individuals or a singular verb when we think of the group as a single unit.

In American English, a singular verb is used with collective nouns.

**** Note that *police* is always followed by a plural verb.**

British English	American English
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>My family is/are visiting from Pakistan.</i> <i>My team is/are winning the match.</i> <i>The crew is/are on the way to the airport.</i> <p>BUT:</p> <p><i>The police are investigating the crime.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>My family is visiting from Pakistan.</i> <i>My team is winning the match.</i> <i>The crew is on the way to the airport.</i> <p>BUT:</p> <p><i>The police are investigating the crime.</i></p>

4. have and take

In British English, the verbs *have* and *take* are commonly used with nouns like *bath*, *shower*, *wash* to speak about washing and with nouns like *break*, *holiday*, *rest* to speak about resting.

In American English, only the verb *take* (and not the verb *have*) is used this way.

British English	American English
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>I'm going to have/take a shower.</i>• <i>Let's have/take a break.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>I'm going to take a shower.</i>• <i>Let's take a break.</i>

5. shall

In British English, people often use ***Shall I ...?*** to offer to do something and/or ***Shall we ...?*** to make a suggestion.

It is very unusual for speakers of American English to use *shall*. They normally use an alternative like ***Should/Can I ...?*** or ***Do you want/Would you like ...?*** or ***How about ...?*** instead.

British English	American English
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>It's hot in here. Shall I open the window?</i>• <i>Shall we meet in the café at 5?</i>• <i>Shall we try that again?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>It's hot in here. Can I open the window?</i>• <i>Do you want to meet in the café at 5?</i>• <i>How about we try that again?</i>

Part 6

continuous and future perfect

Do you know how to use phrases like I'll be studying or I'll have finished?

Look at these examples to see how the future continuous and future perfect are used.

- In three years' time, I'll be studying medicine.
- In five years' time, I'll have finished studying medicine.

Future continuous

We can use the future continuous (will/won't be + -ing form) to talk about future actions that:

will be in progress at a specific time in the future:

- When you come out of school tomorrow, I'll be boarding a plane.
- Try to call before 8 o'clock. After that, we'll be watching the match.
- You can visit us during the first week of July. I won't be working then.

we see as new, different or temporary:

a simple (will/won't have + past participle) to talk about something that will be completed before a specific time in the future.

- The guests are coming at 8 p.m. I'll have finished cooking by then.
- On 9 October we'll have been married for 50 years.
- Will you have gone to bed when I get back?

We can use phrases like by or by the time (meaning 'at some point before') and in or in a day's time / in two months' time / in five years' time etc. (meaning 'at the end of this period') to give the time period in which the action will be completed.

- I won't have written all the reports by next week.
- By the time we arrive, the kids will have gone to bed.
- I'll have finished in an hour and then we can watch a film.
- In three years' time, I'll have graduated from university.

Part 7

Conditionals

Do you know how to use the zero, first and second conditionals?

Look at these examples to see how zero, first and second conditionals are used.

- If you freeze water, it becomes solid.
- If it rains tomorrow, I'll take the car.
- If I lived closer to the cinema, I would go more often.

Conditionals describe the result of a certain condition. The “If” clause tells you the condition (If you study hard) and the main clause tells you the result (you will pass your exams). The order of the clauses does not change the meaning.

- If you study hard, you will pass your exams.
- You will pass your exams if you study hard.

Conditional sentences are often divided into different types.

***** Zero conditional**

We use the zero conditional to talk about things that are generally true, especially for laws and rules.

- If I drink too much coffee, I can't sleep at night.
- Ice melts if you heat it.
- When the sun goes down, it gets dark.

The structure is: if/when + present simple >> present simple.

***** First Conditional**

We use the first conditional when we talk about future situations we believe are real or possible.

- If it doesn't rain tomorrow, we'll go to the beach.
- Arsenal will be top of the league if they win.
- When I finish work, I'll call you.

In first conditional sentences, the structure is usually:

if/when + present simple >> will + infinitive.

It is also common to use this structure with unless, as long as, as soon as or in case instead of "IF"

- I'll leave as soon as the babysitter arrives.
- I don't want to stay in London unless I get a well-paid job.
- I'll give you a key in case I'm not at home.
- You can go to the party, as long as you're back by midnight.

*** **Second conditional**

The second conditional is used to imagine present or future situations that are impossible or unlikely in reality.

- If we had a garden, we could have a cat.
- If I won a lot of money, I'd buy a big house in the country.
- I wouldn't worry if I were you.

The structure is usually: if + past simple >> + would + infinitive.

When “**IF**” is followed by the verb be, it is grammatically correct to say if I were, if he were, if she were and if it were. However, it is also common to hear these structures with was, especially in the he/she form.

- If I were you, I wouldn't mention it.
- If she was prime minister, she would invest more money in schools.
- He would travel more if he was younger

*** **Third conditionals and mixed conditionals**

Do you know how to use third and mixed conditionals?

Look at these examples to see how third and mixed conditionals are used.

- We would have walked to the top of the mountain if the weather hadn't been so bad.
- If we'd moved to Scotland when I was a child, I would have a Scottish accent now.
- If she was really my friend, she wouldn't have lied to me.

Conditionals describe the result of a certain condition. The “if” clause tells you the condition (If I hadn't been ill) and the main clause tells you the result (I would have gone to the party). The order of the clauses does not change the meaning.

- If I hadn't been ill, I would have gone to the party.
- I would have gone to the party if I hadn't been ill.

Conditional sentences are often divided into different types.

Third conditional

The third conditional is used to imagine a different past. We imagine a change in a past situation and the different result of that change.

- If I had understood the instructions properly, I would have passed the exam.
- We wouldn't have got lost if my phone hadn't run out of battery.

In third conditional sentences, the structure is usually:

If + past perfect >> would have + past participle.

Mixed conditionals

We can use mixed conditionals when we imagine a past change with a result in the present or a present change with a result in the past.

1. Past/Present

Here's a sentence imagining how a change in a past situation would have a result in the present.

- If I hadn't got the job in Tokyo, I wouldn't be with my current partner.

So the structure is: If + past perfect >> would + infinitive.

2. Present/Past

Here's a sentence imagining how a different situation in the present would mean that the past was different as well.

- It's really important. If it wasn't, I wouldn't have called you on your holiday.

And the structure is: If + past simple >> would have + past participle.

Part 8

Modals – deductions about the past

Do you know how to use modal verbs to show how certain you are about past events?

Look at these examples to see how must, might, may, could, can't and couldn't are used in the past.

- An earthquake? That must have been terrifying!
- We don't know for sure that Alex broke the coffee table. It might have been the dog.
- How did she fail that exam? She can't have studied very much.

We can use modal verbs for deduction – guessing if something is true using the available information. The modal verb we choose shows how certain we are about the possibility. This page focuses on making deductions about the past.

must have

We use must have + past participle when we feel sure about what happened.

- Who told the newspapers about the prime minister's plans? It must have been someone close to him.
- The thief must have had a key. The door was locked and nothing was broken.
- Oh, good! We've got milk. Mo must have bought some yesterday.

might have / may have

We can use might have or may have + past participle when we think it's possible that something happened.

- I think I might have left the air conditioning on. Please can you check?
- Police think the suspect may have left the country using a fake passport.

May have is more formal than might have. Could have is also possible in this context but less common.

can't have / couldn't have

We use can't have and couldn't have + past participle when we think it's not possible that something happened.

- She can't have driven there. Her car keys are still here.
- I thought I saw Adnan this morning but it couldn't have been him – he's in Greece this week.

Do you know how to use modal verbs to say how certain you are about a possibility?

Look at these examples to see how must, might, may, could and can't can be used.

- That must be the main entrance. I can see people queuing to get in.
- I've lost my keys. They might be at work or they could be in the car.
- You can't be bored already! You've only been here five minutes.

We can use modal verbs for deduction – guessing if something is true using the available information. The modal verb we choose shows how certain we are about the possibility. This page focuses on making deductions about the present or future.

must

We use must when we feel sure that something is true or it's the only realistic possibility.

- This must be her house. I can see her car in the garage.
- He must live near here because he always walks to work.
- Come inside and get warm. You must be freezing out there!

might, may, could

We use might, may or could to say that we think something is possible but we're not sure.

- She's not here yet. She might be stuck in traffic.
- He's not answering. He could be in class.
- We regret to inform you that some services may be delayed due to the bad weather.

*****They all have the same meaning, but may is more formal than might and could.**

can't

We use can't when we feel sure that something is not possible.

- It can't be far now. We've been driving for hours.
- She can't know about the complaint. She's promoted him to team leader.
- It can't be easy for him, looking after three kids on his own.

*** **Notice:** These verbs, like all modal verbs, are followed by an infinitive without to.

Modals – permission and obligation

Do you know how to use modal verbs to talk about permission and obligation?

Look at these examples to see how can, can't, must, mustn't, have to and don't have to are used.

- You can put your shoes and coat over there.
- You can't leave your bike there.
- I must call the electrician and get that light fixed.
- You mustn't worry about me. I'll be fine.
- You have to have a licence to drive a car.
- You don't have to have a licence to cycle on the roads.

We often use verbs with modal meanings to talk about permission and obligation.

Permission

can

We often use can to ask for and give permission.

- Can I sit here?
- You can use my car if you like.
- Can I make a suggestion?

could

We also use could to ask for permission (but not to give it). Could is more formal and polite than can.

- Could I ask you something?
- Could I interrupt?
- Could I borrow your pen for a moment, please?

may

May is the most formal way to ask for and give permission.

- May I see your passport, please?
- Customers may request a refund within a period of 30 days.
- These pages may be photocopied for classroom use.

Prohibition

We use can't and mustn't to show that something is prohibited – it is not allowed.

can't

We use can't to talk about something that is against the rules, particularly when we didn't make the rules.

- What does this sign say? Oh, we can't park here.
- You can't take photos in the museum. They're really strict about it.
- Sorry, we can't sell knives to under-18s.

must not/mustn't

We use must not to talk about what is not permitted. It is common on public signs and notices informing people of rules and laws.

- Visitors must not park in the staff car park.
- Baggage must not be left unattended.
- Guests must not make noise after 10 p.m.

We use mustn't particularly when the prohibition comes from the speaker.

- **(Parent to child)** You mustn't say things like that to your sister.
- **(Teacher to student)** You mustn't be late to class.
- I mustn't let that happen again.

Obligation

We use have to and must to express obligation. There is a slight difference between the way we use them.

have to

Have to shows us that the obligation comes from outside the speaker.

- We have to wear a uniform when we're working in reception.
- (Student to teacher) When do we have to hand in our homework?
- Al has to work tomorrow so he can't come.

We sometimes call this 'external obligation'.

must

Must expresses a strong obligation or necessity. It often shows us that the obligation comes from the speaker (or the authority that wrote the sentence).

- I must phone my dad. It's his birthday today.
- (Teacher to student) You must hand in your homework on Tuesday or you will lose ten per cent of your mark.
- (Sign on a plane) Seat belts must be worn by all passengers.

Notice: We don't use must to express obligation in the past. We use have to instead.

- I had to pay £85 to renew my passport last week.

No obligation

don't have to

We use don't have to show that there is no obligation. You can do something if you want to but it's not compulsory.

- You don't have to wear a tie in our office but some people like to dress more formally.
- You don't have to go to the bank to do a transfer. You can do it online.
- You don't have to come with me, honestly. I'll be fine.

Part 9

Participle clauses

Do you know how to use participle clauses to say information in a more economical way?

Look at these examples to see how participle clauses are used.

- Looked after carefully, these boots will last for many years.
- Not wanting to hurt his feelings, I avoided the question.
- Having lived through difficult times together, they were very close friends.

Participle clauses enable us to say information in a more economical way.

They are formed using present participles (going, reading, seeing, walking, etc.), past participles (gone, read, seen, walked, etc.) or perfect participles (having gone, having read, having seen, having walked, etc.).

We can use participle clauses when the participle and the verb in the main clause have the same subject. For example,

- Waiting for Ellie, I made some tea. (While I was waiting for Ellie, I made some tea.)

Participle clauses do not have a specific tense. The tense is indicated by the verb in the main clause.

Participle clauses are mainly used in written texts, particularly in a literary, academic or journalistic style.

Present participle clauses

Here are some common ways we use present participle clauses. Note that present participles have a similar meaning to active verbs.

- To give the result of an action
- The bomb exploded, destroying the building.
- To give the reason for an action
- Knowing she loved reading, Richard bought her a book.
- To talk about an action that happened at the same time as another action
- Standing in the queue, I realised I didn't have any money.
- To add information about the subject of the main clause
- Starting in the new year, the new policy bans cars in the city centre.

Past participle clauses

Here are some common ways that we use past participle clauses. Note that past participles normally have a passive meaning.

- With a similar meaning to an if condition
- Used in this way, participles can make your writing more concise. (If you use participles in this way, ...)
- To give the reason for an action

- Worried by the news, she called the hospital.
- To add information about the subject of the main clause
- Filled with pride, he walked towards the stage.

Relative clauses – defining relative clauses

Do you know how to define who or what you are talking about using relative clauses?

Look at these examples to see how defining relative clauses are used.

- Are you the one who sent me the email?
- The phone which has the most features is also the most expensive.
- This is the video that I wanted to show you.
- The person they spoke to was really helpful.

Relative clauses give us information about the person or thing mentioned.

Defining relative clauses give us essential information – information that tells us who or what we are talking about.

- The woman who lives next door works in a bank.
- These are the flights that have been cancelled.

We usually use a relative pronoun or adverb to start a defining relative clause: **who, which, that, when, where or whose.**

who/that

We can use who or that to talk about people. that is more common and a bit more informal.

- She's the woman who cuts my hair.
- He's the man that I met at the conference.

which/that

We can use which or that to talk about things. **that** is more common and a bit more informal.

- There was a one-year guarantee which came with the TV.
- The laptop that I bought last week has started making a strange noise!

Other pronouns

when can refer to a time.

- Summer is the season when I'm happiest.

where can refer to a place.

- That's the stadium where Real Madrid play.

whose refers to the person that something belongs to.

- He's a musician whose albums have sold millions.

Omitting the relative pronoun

Sometimes we can leave out the relative pronoun. For example, we can usually leave out who, which or that if it is followed by a subject.

- The assistant [that] we met was really kind.

(we = subject, can omit that)

***** We can't usually leave it out if it is followed by a verb.**

- The assistant that helped us was really kind.

(helped = verb, can't omit that)

Relative clauses – non-defining relative clauses

Do you know how to give extra information about someone or something using relative clauses?

Look at these examples to see how non-defining relative clauses are used.

- Jack, who's retired now, spends a lot of time with his grandchildren.
- We want to see the new Tom Carter film, which was released on Friday.
- My sister, whose dog I'm looking after, is visiting a friend in Australia.

Relative clauses give us information about the person or thing mentioned.

Non-defining relative clauses give us extra information about someone or something. It isn't essential for understanding who or what we are talking about.

- My grandfather, who's 87, goes swimming every day.
- The house, which was built in 1883, has just been opened to the public.
- The award was given to Sara, whose short story impressed the judges.

We always use a relative pronoun or adverb to start a non-defining relative clause: who, which, whose, when or where (but not that). We also use commas to separate the clause from the rest of the sentence.

who, which and whose

We can use who to talk about people, which to talk about things and whose to refer to the person or thing that something belongs to.

- Yesterday I met my new boss, who was very nice.
- The house, which is very big, is also very cold!
- My next-door neighbour, whose children go to school with ours, has just bought a new car.
- After the port there is a row of fisherman's houses, whose lights can be seen from across the bay.

Places and times

We can use **which** with a preposition to talk about places and times. In these cases it's more common to use where or when instead of which and the preposition.

- City Park, which we used to go to, has been closed down.
- City Park, where we used to go, has been closed down.
- December, which Christmas is celebrated in, is a summer month for the southern hemisphere.
- December, when Christmas is celebrated, is a summer month for the southern hemisphere.

However, when we use which without a preposition, we can't use where or when.

- Centre Park, which we love, is always really busy on Saturdays.
- February, which is my favorite month, lasts 29 days this year.

Perfect participle clauses

Perfect participle clauses show that the action they describe was finished before the action in the main clause. Perfect participles can be structured to make an active or passive meaning.

- Having got dressed, he slowly went downstairs.
- Having finished their training, they will be fully qualified doctors.
- Having been made redundant, she started looking for a new job.

Participle clauses after conjunctions and prepositions

It is also common for participle clauses, especially with -ing, to follow conjunctions and prepositions such as before, after, instead of, on, since, when, while and in spite of.

- Before cooking, you should wash your hands.
- Instead of complaining about it, they should try doing something positive.
- On arriving at the hotel, he went to get changed.
- While packing her things, she thought about the last two years.
- In spite of having read the instructions twice, I still couldn't understand how to use it.

Past ability

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Do you know how to use could, was able to and managed to to talk about past abilities?

Look at these examples to see how could, was able to and managed to are used.

- I could play the guitar when I was seven years old.
- The police weren't able to catch the speeding car.
- The bird managed to escape from its cage and fly away.

General ability

We usually use could or couldn't to talk about general abilities in the past.

- She could paint before she started school.
- I couldn't cook until I went to university.
- When I lived next to the pool, I could go swimming every day.

Ability on one occasion – successful

When we talk about achieving something on a specific occasion in the past, we use was/were able to (= had the ability to) and managed to (= succeeded in doing something difficult).

- The burglar was able to get in through the bathroom window.
- The burglar managed to get in through the bathroom window even though it was locked.

Could is not usually correct when we're talking about ability at a specific moment in the past.

Ability on one occasion – unsuccessful

When we talk about a specific occasion when someone didn't have the ability to do something, we can use *wasn't/weren't able to*, *didn't manage to* or *couldn't*.

- The speaker *wasn't able to* attend the conference due to illness.
- She *couldn't* watch the match because she was working.
- They worked on it for months but they *didn't manage to* find a solution.

Notice : *that wasn't/weren't able to* is more formal than *couldn't*, while *didn't manage to* emphasizes that the thing was difficult to do.

Part 11

Past habits – 'used to', 'would' and the past simple

Do you know how to talk about past habits using *used to*, *would* and the past simple?

Look at these examples to see how *used to*, *would* and the past simple are used.

- They *used to* live in London.
- I *didn't use to* like olives.
- We *would* always go to the seaside for our holidays.
- But one holiday we went to the mountains instead.

When we talk about things in the past that are not true any more, we can do it in different ways.

Used to + infinitive

We can use “**Use to**” to talk about past states that are not true any more.

- We used to live in New York when I was a kid.
- There didn't use to be a supermarket there. When did it open?
- Did you use to have a garden?

We can also use “**Use to**” to talk about past habits (repeated past actions) that don't happen any more.

- I used to go swimming every Thursday when I was at school.
- She used to smoke but she gave up a few years ago.

used to + infinitive should not be confused with be/get used to + -ing, which has a different meaning. The difference is covered here.

Would

We can use **would** to talk about repeated past actions that don't happen any more.

- Every Saturday I would go on a long bike ride.
- My dad would read me amazing stories every night at bedtime.

would for past habits is slightly more formal than used to. It is often used in stories. We don't normally use the negative or question form of would for past habits.

Notice: we can't usually use “**would**” to talk about past states.

Past simple

We can always use the past simple as an alternative to **used to** or **would** to talk about past states or habits. The main difference is that the past simple doesn't emphasize the repeated or continuous nature of the action or situation. Also, the past simple doesn't make it so clear that the thing is no longer true.

- We went to the same beach every summer.
- We used to go to the same beach every summer.
- We would go to the same beach every summer.

If something happened only once, we must use the past simple.

- I went to Egypt in 2014.

Past perfect

Do you know how to use phrases like :They'd finished the project by March or Had you finished work when I called?

- He couldn't make a sandwich because he'd forgotten to buy bread.
- The hotel was full, so I was glad that we'd booked in advance.
- My new job wasn't exactly what I'd expected.

Time up to a point in the past

We use the past perfect simple (had + past participle) to talk about time up to a certain point in the past.

- She'd published her first poem by the time she was eight.
- We'd finished all the water before we were halfway up the mountain.
- Had the parcel arrived when you called yesterday?

Past perfect for the earlier of two past actions

We can use the past perfect to show the order of two past events. The past perfect shows the earlier action and the past simple shows the later action.

- When the police arrived, the thief had escaped.

It doesn't matter in which order we say the two events. The following sentence has the same meaning.

- The thief had escaped when the police arrived.

Notice: if there's only a single event, we don't use the past perfect, even if it happened a long time ago.

- The Romans spoke Latin. (NOT The Romans had spoken Latin.)

Past perfect with before

We can also use the past perfect followed by before to show that an action was not done or was incomplete when the past simple action happened.

- They left before I'd spoken to them.
- Sadly, the author died before he'd finished the series.

Adverbs

We often use the adverbs already (= 'before the specified time'), still (= as previously), just (= 'a very short time before the specified time'), ever (= 'at any time before the specified time') or never (= 'at no time before the specified time') with the past perfect.

- I called his office but he'd already left.
- It still hadn't rained at the beginning of May.
- I went to visit her when she'd just moved to Berlin.
- It was the most beautiful photo I'd ever seen.

- Had you ever visited London when you moved there?
- I'd never met anyone from California before I met Jim.

Phrasal verbs

Do you know how to use verbs in phrases like pick the kids up, turn the music down and look after my cat?

Look at these examples to see how phrasal verbs are used.

- This is the form. Please can you fill it in?
- Why are you bringing that argument up now?
- Police are looking into connections between the two crimes.
- We need to come up with a solution.

Phrasal verbs are very common in English, especially in more informal contexts.

They are made up of a verb and a particle or, sometimes, two particles. The particle often changes the meaning of the verb.

- I called Jen to see how she was. (call = to telephone)
- They've called off the meeting. (call off = to cancel)

In terms of word order, there are two main types of phrasal verb: separable and inseparable.

Separable

With separable phrasal verbs, the verb and particle can be apart or together.

- They've called the meeting off.

OR

- They've called off the meeting.

However, separable phrasal verbs must be separated when you use a pronoun.

- The meeting? They've called it off.

Here are some common separable phrasal verbs:

- I didn't want to bring the situation up at the meeting.
(bring up = start talking about a particular subject)
- Please can you fill this form in?
(fill in = write information in a form or document)
- I'll pick you up from the station at 8 p.m.
(pick up = collect someone in a car or other vehicle to take them somewhere)
- She turned the job down because she didn't want to move to Glasgow.

(turn down = to not accept an offer)

Non-separable

Some phrasal verbs cannot be separated.

- Who looks after the baby when you're at work?

Even when there is a pronoun, the verb and particle remain together.

- Who looks after her when you're at work?

Here are some common non-separable phrasal verbs:

- I came across your email when I was clearing my inbox.
(come across = to find something by chance)
- The caterpillar turned into a beautiful butterfly.
(turn into = become)
- It was quite a major operation. It took months to get over it and feel normal again.

(get over = recover from something)

- We are aware of the problem and we are looking into it.

(look into = investigate)

Some multi-word verbs are inseparable simply because they don't take an object.

- I get up at 7 a.m.

With two particles

Phrasal verbs with two particles are also inseparable. Even if you use a pronoun, you put it after the particles.

- Who came up with that idea?

(come up with = think of an idea or plan)

- Let's get rid of these old magazines to make more space.

(get rid of = remove or become free of something that you don't want)

- I didn't really get on with my stepbrother when I was a teenager.

(get on with = like and be friendly towards someone)

- Can you hear that noise all the time? I don't know how you put up with it.

(put up with = tolerate something difficult or annoying)

- The concert's on Friday. I'm really looking forward to it.

(look forward to = be happy and excited about something that is going to happen.)

Part 11

Present perfect

Do you know how to use phrases like She's called every day this week, I've broken my leg and Have you ever been to Scotland?

Look at these examples to see how the present perfect is used.

- He's been to ten different countries.
- I haven't seen her today.
- My phone's run out of battery. Can I use yours?
- Have you ever dyed your hair a different colour?

We use the present perfect simple (have or has + past participle) to talk about past actions or states which are still connected to the present.

Unfinished time and states

We often use the present perfect to say what we've done in an unfinished time period, such as today, this week, this year, etc., and with expressions such as so far, until now, before, etc.

- They've been on holiday twice this year.
- We haven't had a lot of positive feedback so far.
- I'm sure I've seen that film before.

We also use it to talk about life experiences, as our life is also an unfinished time period. We often use never in negative sentences and ever in questions.

- I've worked for six different companies.
- He's never won a gold medal.
- Have you ever been to Australia?

We also use the present perfect to talk about unfinished states, especially with for, since and how long.

- She's wanted to be a police officer since she was a child.
- I haven't known him for very long.
- How long have you had that phone?

Finished time and states

If we say when something happened, or we feel that that part of our life is finished, we use the past simple.

- We visited Russia for the first time in 1992.
- I went to three different primary schools.
- Before she retired, she worked in several different countries.

We also use the past simple for finished states.

- We knew all our neighbours when we were children.
- I didn't like bananas for a really long time. Now I love them!

Past actions with a result in the present

We can use the present perfect to talk about a past action that has a result in the present.

- He's broken his leg so he can't go on holiday.
- There's been an accident on the main road, so let's take a different route.
- They haven't called me, so I don't think they need me today.

Again, if we say when it happened, we use the past simple.

- He broke his leg last week so he can't go on holiday.

However, we often use the present perfect with words like just, recently, already, yet and still.

- We've recently started going to the gym.
- She's already finished season one and now she's watching season two.
- Have you checked your emails yet?

Present perfect simple and continuous

Do you know the difference between *We've painted the room* and *We've been painting the room*?

Look at these examples to see how the present perfect simple and continuous are used.

- We've painted the bathroom.
- She's been training for a half-marathon.
- I've had three coffees already today!
- They've been waiting for hours.

We use both the present perfect simple (*have* or *has* + past participle) and the present perfect continuous (*have* or *has* + *been* + *-ing* form) to talk about past actions or states which are still connected to the present.

Focusing on result or activity

The present perfect simple usually focuses on the result of the activity in some way, and the present perfect continuous usually focuses on the activity itself in some way.

Present perfect simple	Present perfect continuous
Focuses on the result	Focuses on the activity
<i>You've cleaned the bathroom! It looks lovely!</i>	<i>I've been gardening. It's so nice out there.</i>
Says 'how many'	Says 'how long'
<i>She's read ten books this summer.</i>	<i>She's been reading that book all day.</i>
Describes a completed action	Describes an activity which may continue
<i>I've written you an email.</i>	<i>I've been writing emails.</i>
	When we can see evidence of recent activity
	<i>The grass looks wet. Has it been raining? I know, I'm really red. I've been running!</i>

Ongoing states and actions

We often use *for*, ***since*** and ***how long*** with the present perfect simple to talk about **ongoing states**.

- How long have you known each other?
- We've known each other since we were at school.

We often use *for*, ***since*** and ***how long*** with the present perfect continuous to talk about **ongoing single or repeated actions**.

- How long have they been playing tennis?

- They've been playing tennis for an hour.
- They've been playing tennis every Sunday for years.

Sometimes the present perfect continuous can emphasise that a situation is temporary.

- I usually go to the gym on the High Street, but it's closed for repairs at the moment so I've been going to the one in the shopping centre.

Part 12

Reported speech 1 – statements

Do you know how to report what somebody else said?

Look at these examples to see how we can tell someone what another person said.

direct speech: 'I love the Toy Story films,' she said.

indirect speech: She said she loved the Toy Story films.

direct speech: 'I worked as a waiter before becoming a chef,' he said.

indirect speech: He said he'd worked as a waiter before becoming a chef.

direct speech: 'I'll phone you tomorrow,' he said.

indirect speech: He said he'd phone me the next day.

Reported speech is when we tell someone what another person said. To do this, we can use direct speech or indirect speech.

direct speech: 'I work in a bank,' said Daniel.

indirect speech: Daniel said that he worked in a bank.

In indirect speech, we often use a tense which is 'further back' in the past (e.g. worked) than the tense originally used (e.g. work). This is called 'backshift'. We also may need to change other words that were used, for example pronouns.

When we backshift, present simple changes to past simple, present continuous changes to past continuous and present perfect changes to past perfect.

- 'I travel a lot in my job.'
- Jamila said that she travelled a lot in her job.
- 'The baby's sleeping!'
- He told me the baby was sleeping.
- 'I've hurt my leg.'
- She said she'd hurt her leg.

Past simple and past continuous

When we backshift, past simple usually changes to past perfect simple, and past continuous usually changes to past perfect continuous.

- 'We lived in China for five years.'
- She told me they'd lived in China for five years.
- 'It was raining all day.'
- He told me it had been raining all day.

Past perfect

- The past perfect doesn't change.
- ⇒ 'I'd tried everything without success, but this new medicine is great.'
- He said he'd tried everything without success, but the new medicine was great.

No backshift

If what the speaker has said is still true or relevant, it's not always necessary to change the tense. This might happen when the speaker has used a present tense.

- 'I go to the gym next to your house.'
- ⇒ Jenny told me that she goes to the gym next to my house. I'm thinking about going with her.
- 'I'm working in Italy for the next six months.'
- ⇒ He told me he's working in Italy for the next six months. Maybe I should visit him!
- 'I've broken my arm!'
- ⇒ She said she's broken her arm, so she won't be at work this week.

Pronouns, demonstratives and adverbs of time and place

Pronouns also usually change in indirect speech.

- 'I enjoy working in my garden,' said Bob.
- ⇒ Bob said that he enjoyed working in his garden.
- 'We played tennis for our school,' said Alina.
- ⇒ Alina told me they'd played tennis for their school.

However, if you are the person or one of the people who spoke, then the pronouns don't change.

- 'I'm working on my thesis,' I said.
- ⇒ I told her that I was working on my thesis.
- 'We want our jobs back!' we said.
- ⇒ We said that we wanted our jobs back.

We also change demonstratives and adverbs of time and place if they are no longer accurate.

- 'This is my house.'
- ⇒ He said this was his house. [You are currently in front of the house.]
- ⇒ He said that was his house. [You are not currently in front of the house.]
- 'We like it here.'
- ⇒ She told me they like it here. [You are currently in the place they like.]
- ⇒ She told me they like it there. [You are not in the place they like.]
- 'I'm planning to do it today.'
- ⇒ She told me she's planning to do it today. [It is currently still the same day.]
- ⇒ She told me she was planning to do it that day. [It is not the same day any more.]

In the same way, these changes to those, now changes to then, yesterday changes to the day before, tomorrow changes to the next/following day and ago changes to before.

Reported speech – questions

Do you know how to report a question that somebody asked?

Look at these examples to see how we can tell someone what another person asked.

direct speech: 'Do you work from home?' he said.

indirect speech: He asked me if I worked from home.

direct speech: 'Who did you see?' she asked.

indirect speech: She asked me who I'd seen.

direct speech: 'Could you write that down for me?' she asked.

indirect speech: She asked me to write it down.

A reported question is when we tell someone what another person asked. To do this, we can use direct speech or indirect speech.

direct speech: 'Do you like working in sales?' he asked.

indirect speech: He asked me if I liked working in sales.

In indirect speech, we change the question structure (e.g. Do you like) to a statement structure (e.g. I like).

We also often make changes to the tenses and other words in the same way as for reported statements (e.g. have done → had done, today → that day). You can learn about these changes on the Reported speech 1 – statements page.

Yes/no questions

In yes/no questions, we use if or whether to report the question. If is more common.

- 'Are you going to the Helsinki conference?'
- ⇒ He asked me if I was going to the Helsinki conference.
- 'Have you finished the project yet?'
- ⇒ She asked us whether we'd finished the project yet.

Questions with a question word

In what, where, why, who, when or how questions, we use the question word to report the question.

- 'What time does the train leave?'
- He asked me what time the train left.
- 'Where did he go?'
- She asked where he went.

Reporting verbs

The most common reporting verb for questions is ask, but we can also use verbs like enquire, want to know or wonder.

- 'Did you bring your passports?'
- She wanted to know if they'd brought their passports.
- 'When could you get this done by?'
- He wondered when we could get it done by.

Offers, requests and suggestions

If the question is making an offer, request or suggestion, we can use a specific verb pattern instead, for example offer + infinitive, ask + infinitive or suggest + ing.

- 'Would you like me to help you?'
- He offered to help me.
- 'Can you hold this for me, please?'
- She asked me to hold it.
- 'Why don't we check with Joel?'
- She suggested checking with Joel.

Reported speech 3 – reporting verbs

direct speech: 'You should come, it's going to be a lot of fun,' she said.

indirect speech: She persuaded me to come.

direct speech: 'Wait here,' he said.

indirect speech: He told us to wait there.

direct speech: 'It wasn't me who finished the coffee,' he said.

indirect speech: He denied finishing the coffee.

When we tell someone what another person said, we often use the verbs say, tell or ask. These are called 'reporting verbs'. However, we can also use other reporting verbs. Many reporting verbs can be followed by another verb in either an infinitive or an -ing form.

Reporting verb + infinitive

Verbs like advise, agree, challenge, claim, decide, demand, encourage, invite, offer, persuade, promise, refuse and remind can follow an infinitive pattern.

- 'Let's see. I'll have the risotto, please.'
- He decided to have the risotto.
- 'I'll do the report by Friday, for sure.'
- She promised to do the report by Friday.
- 'It's not a good idea to write your passwords down.'
- They advised us not to write our passwords down.

We can also use an infinitive to report imperatives, with a reporting verb like tell, order, instruct, direct or warn.

- 'Please wait for me in reception.'
- The guide told us to wait for her in reception.
- 'Don't go in there!'
- The police officer warned us not to go in there.

Reporting verb + -ing form

Verbs like admit, apologise for, complain about, deny, insist on, mention and suggest can follow an -ing form pattern.

- 'I broke the window.'
- She admitted breaking the window.
- 'I'm really sorry I didn't get back to you sooner.'
- He apologised for not getting back to me sooner.
- 'Let's take a break.'
- She suggested taking a break.

Stative verbs

- I think that's a good idea.
- I love this song!
- That coffee smells good.
- Do you have a pen?

Stative verbs describe a state rather than an action. They aren't usually used in the present continuous form.

- I don't know the answer. I'm not knowing the answer.
- She really likes you. She's really liking you.
- He seems happy at the moment. He's seeming happy at the moment.

Stative verbs often relate to:

- thoughts and opinions: agree, believe, doubt, guess, imagine, know, mean, recognise, remember, suspect, think, understand
- feelings and emotions: dislike, hate, like, love, prefer, want, wish
- senses and perceptions: appear, be, feel, hear, look, see, seem, smell, taste
- possession and measurement: belong, have, measure, own, possess, weigh.

Verbs that are sometimes stative

A number of verbs can refer to states or actions, depending on the context.

- I think it's a good idea.
- Wait a moment! I'm thinking.

The first sentence expresses an opinion. It is a mental state, so we use present simple. In the second example the speaker is actively processing thoughts about something. It is an action in progress, so we use present continuous.

Some other examples are:

+have

- I have an old car. (state – possession)
- I'm having a quick break. (action – having a break is an activity)

+see

- Do you see any problems with that? (state – opinion)
- We're seeing Tadanari tomorrow afternoon. (action – we're meeting him)

+be

- He's so interesting! (state – his permanent quality)
- He's being very unhelpful. (action – he is temporarily behaving this way)

+taste

- This coffee tastes delicious. (state – our perception of the coffee)
- Look! The chef is tasting the soup. (action – tasting the soup is an activity)

Other verbs like this include: agree, appear, doubt, feel, guess, hear, imagine, look, measure, remember, smell, weigh, wish.

The future – degrees of certainty

Do you know how to use phrases like will definitely, be likely to and probably won't to say how sure you are about future events?

Look at these examples to see how we can express different degrees of certainty about the future.

- I'll definitely be at the meeting, don't worry.
- She's likely to say yes if you ask nicely.
- It probably won't rain later according to the weather forecast.

We can show how certain we are about the future by using modal verbs and other expressions.

Modal verbs and adverbs

We can use modal verbs (such as will, might, may or could) and adverbs (such as probably and definitely) to show how sure we are.

+Very sure

- People will definitely work from home more in the future.
- Robots definitely won't replace all human jobs.

+Sure

- Donna will really enjoy this film.
- You won't regret it.

+Almost sure

- We'll probably finish the project by tomorrow.
- He probably won't have enough time.

+Not sure

- I might go to the party, but I'm not sure yet.
- He hasn't studied much, so he might not pass the exam.

When you are not sure, we can also use may, could and may not. However, we don't usually use could not to talk about the future.

Other expressions

We can also use other expressions such as be bound to and be likely to, or verbs such as think and doubt.

+Very sure

- He's bound to feel nervous before his driving test.
- She's certain to get that job!
- He's certain that he'll get here on time.
- There's no chance that we'll ever win the lottery.
- There's no way that my boss will give me the day off.

+Sure

- I'm sure that you'll do well in the interview.
- Are you sure that you won't be available?

+Almost sure

- The government's likely to call an election soon.
- Ali's unlikely to be invited to the party.
- There's a good chance that it'll snow this week.
- There's not much chance that I'll finish this essay tonight.
- She thinks he'll be able to help.
- I don't think we'll have petrol-based cars in the future.

- I doubt they'll have any trouble finding the address.
- What do you expect mobile phones will be like in ten years' time?

+Not sure

- There's a chance that she'll be back at work tomorrow.
- There's a chance that he might come and visit us next week.
- I think we might see more of these problems in the next few years.
- I'm not sure that I'll be able to finish this pizza!

Verbs and prepositions

+To

- Can you wait for me to finish my lunch?
- I'm relying on my co-worker to answer all my emails while I'm on holiday.
- Sun cream protects you from getting burnt.

When a verb is part of a longer sentence, it is often followed by a specific preposition.

- I agree with Mike.
- She listens to the radio a lot.
- He thanked me for the flowers.

There are no grammatical rules to help you know which preposition is used with which verb, so it's a good idea to try to learn them together. To help you do this, write new vocabulary in your notebook in a sentence or phrase. Here are some common verbs for each preposition.

+For

- They're waiting for a bus.
- He apologised for being late.
- I applied for the job but I didn't get it.

- How do you ask for a coffee in Polish?
- I can't go out tonight because I have to prepare for my interview tomorrow.

+ From

- This spray should protect you from mosquitoes.
- Has he recovered from the accident yet?
- She won an award because she saved someone from drowning.
- I suffer from allergies.

+ In

- She doesn't believe in coincidences.
- Our company specialises in computer software.
- You have to work hard if you want to succeed in life.

+Of

- I don't approve of hunting animals for their fur.
- Our dog died of old age.
- This shampoo smells of bananas.

+ On

- Their decision will depend on the test results.
- The film is based on the novel by Boris Pasternak.
- If you make so much noise, I can't concentrate on my work.
- Come on! We're relying on you
- We don't agree on anything but we're still good friends.

Verbs with to

- What kind of music do you like listening to?
- Can I introduce you to my grandfather?

- Please refer to the notes at the end for more information.
- Nobody responded to my complaint.
- She apologised to me the next day.

Verbs with with

- I agree with everything you've said.
- My assistant will provide you with more information if you need it.
- We're finding it difficult to deal with the stress.

Verbs followed by '-ing' or by 'to' + infinitive 2

Do you know the difference between stop doing something and stop to do something?

Look at these examples to see how these verb patterns work.

- The bus stopped picking up the children.
- The bus stopped to pick up the children.
- I want to try studying with a friend to see if it helps us stay more motivated.
- I'm trying to study but it's impossible with all this noise.

Some verbs have a different meaning depending on whether they are followed by an -ing form or to + infinitive.

+stop

Stop + -ing means the action is not happening any more.

- I've stopped buying the newspaper because now I read the news online.

Stop + to + infinitive means that someone or something stops an activity so that they can do something else.

- He stopped the video to ask the students some questions.

+try

Try + -ing means that you are trying something as an experiment, especially as a possible solution to a problem, to see if it works or not.

- Have you tried turning the computer off and on again?

Try + to + infinitive means that something is difficult but you are making an effort to do it.

- I'm trying to learn Japanese but it's very difficult.

+remember/forget

Remember + -ing and forget + -ing refer to having (or not having) a memory of something in the past.

- I remember watching this film before.
- I'll never forget meeting you for the first time in this café.

Remember + to + infinitive and forget + to + infinitive refer to recalling (or not recalling) that there is something we need to do before we do it.

- Please remember to buy some milk on the way home.
- He forgot to lock the door when he went out.